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JOHANN GOTTLOB IMMANUEL BREITKOPF, THE PRINTER, 1719-1794.

BY THOMAS WILLIAM HUCK.

IN the year 1719 Berhnardt Christoph Breitkopf (1695-1777) set up a printing press at Leipzig. The business he then founded has had a continuous existence ever since, and is still carried on under the name of Breitkopf and Härtel, music publishers. The first publication from this press was a Hebrew Bible. This was followed by a number of theological and historical works. Gottsched, the poet, who according to Goëthe shared Breitkopf's house, rendered much assistance in editing the works printed. A printing office with the sign of "zum goldnen Bär" was built in 1732. In 1745, B. C. Breitkopf gave up the printing business to his only son, Johann Gottlob Immanuel, who was born on the 23rd of November in the year that the press was founded. In the year 1765 the office was increased by the addition of the "silberne Bär," and the firm became B. C. Breitkopf & Son. The founder of the business died on the 26th of March, 1777.

The Breitkopfs made their home the gathering-place of men of letters and of the votaries of science, music, and art. At an early age young Breitkopf evidenced a distaste for the printing business and diligently applied himself to the study of Roman literature and philosophy. He acquired such a facility for debating in good Latin that the monks of Breslau, with whom he sustained a long discussion on scholastic subjects, became embarrassed with the promptitude of his answers and humiliated by the elegance of his language compared to their own barbarous jargon, and said to him with impatience, *Vestra dominatio loquitur per phrases.*

Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf, the Printer, 1719-1794. 15

His interest in the art of printing was renewed whilst studying the works of Albert Durer. He saw how that artist deduced the shapes of the letters of the alphabet on mathematical principles. This suggested the idea of more elegant and symmetrical shapes in the various types of letters. In carrying out his ideas he became so diligent and enthusiastic that he speedily effected a total change in German type-founding, both with respect to the composition of the metal and the form of the letters. He spared himself no pains not only in the improvement of the form of German type but also in improvements of such special work as music-printing, map-printing, etc.

As early as 1755 he had made considerable improvements in the printing of music from movable type. At the present time music is printed by one of the four following processes, plate, lithography, photo-zinco, type. Type, which is more generally used for book music, is usually stereotyped, because printing direct from the type soon damages and wears the numerous fine lines required. Carl Tauchnitz of Leipzig was the first to apply stereotype to music notes.

The earliest printed book containing music is the Mainz Psalter printed by Fust and Schoeffer in 1457. Where music notes were required in this work the *four* lines of the stave were printed in red ink, the notes being inserted afterwards by hand. In the second edition, 1459, the lines were black. A copy of the first book containing printed music notes is on exhibition in the King's Library at the British Museum. In this work, which was printed at Esslingen in 1473, the notes were printed from punches, the lines of the stave being left blank to be filled in by hand. In the same year Hans Froschauer of Augsburg printed music from wooden blocks, and the "Musices Opusculum" of Nicolaus Burtius, printed at Bologna in 1487 by Ugo de Rugeriis, which may be seen in the King's Library, British Museum, appears to have been printed the same way. About the year 1500 Ottaviano dei Petrucci established a printing press at Venice. In 1501 he produced a collection of ninety-six songs and in 1503 a collection of masses by Pierre de la Rue in which the stave lines and notes were produced at two separ-



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ate printings. The objection to this system was the expense of double printing. This was overcome in 1506 by Erhard Oeglin of Augsburg, who printed staves and notes together. This adaptation of movable types was soon followed at other places. Schoeffer at Mainz in 1511 and the Gardano family at Venice from 1536 both printed music from movable types. The earliest dated examples printed from copper plates were engraved by Simone Verovio at Rome in 1586. At a later date the various plate processes became very popular.

Great attention was paid to type music during the eighteenth century. "The Musical Miscellany," printed from movable types by John Watts at London in 1729, shows a marked improvement, as the lines of the staves are fairly well joined though the notes themselves are not neat. About the year 1750 Breitkopf produced some music type which he used for a three volume edition of an opera in full score, "Il trionfo della fedelta, dramma per musica di E. T. P. A.," which appeared in 1756. This opera, which was by Antonia Amalia Walburga, Princess of Saxony, who assumed the name Ermelinda Talia Pastorella Arcada, for which the letters E. T. P. A. stand, was the first of a long series of important compositions by Bach, Graun, Mozart, etc. During the Seven Years' War (1756-63) he organized on a large scale a warehouse of German, English, French, and Italian music, and issued systematic catalogues of his stock, thus commencing the special line of business still carried on by Breitkopf & Härtel. His music printing and publishing did not detract from his many other typographical activities. In 1770 he founded a factory for the manufacture of playing cards. Although he disposed of this factory in 1782 he still pursued the study of playing cards, especially from the historical point of view. In 1784 he published his "Ursprung der Spielkarten," or history and origin of playing cards. It was included with essays on the introduction of linen paper and the beginning of wood engraving in Europe in a quarto volume entitled "Versuch, den Ursprung der Spielkarten, die Einführung des Leinenpapieres, und den Anfang der Holzschneidekunst in Europa zu erforschen". The latter part of this work was finished, but not published, before his

death. He was of the opinion that cards were of Eastern invention. The Italian and Spanish names of Naibe and Naipes, by which playing cards were first known in Western Europe, he derived from the Arabic word Nabaa, signifying divination, fortune-telling, or the foretelling of events. The work contains some good plates and must have cost him a great deal of original research.

Another subject which attracted Breitkopf's attention was the printing of maps. The printing of maps dates from about 1460. There is one in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris which was engraved on wood about that time. The maps in the earliest editions of Ptolemy's *Cosmography* containing any, were engraved on copper. Wood engraving, however, seems to have had the preference till Ortelius issued his atlas in the second half of the sixteenth century. In this the maps which were engraved on copper showed such a marked improvement on the wood engraved maps common at that time that copper engraving soon became general for this class of work. Breitkopf conceived the idea of applying movable types to map printing. Between the years 1750 and 1760 he experimented a good deal and actually printed a few copies of a map. These he distributed amongst his friends. At first disregarding the names on the map he endeavoured to adapt pieces of metal to indicate the outlines, hills, towns, and rivers. Minute parallel lines, the length of which varied relatively with the width to be shown, represented the rivers. Towns and large villages were signified by a church and small villages by a small circle. He considered his experiment a failure. A similar scheme was attempted by a person named Preusch of Carlsruhe Haass the Younger of Basle printed an account of this experiment. He also printed a map of the Canton of Basle in 1776 and a similar map of Sicily in 1777. In 1776 Breithopf communicated to "Busching's Journal" an account of his own experiments, with some notes on the system of Haass. It was probably owing to this, or rather to some sceptical remarks upon his experiments which were called forth by this, that he prefixed to his essay on maps, "Ueber den Druck der Geographischen Charten," 4to, Leipzig, 1777, a quarto map of

the country round Leipzig printed from movable types or by the typometric process. He stated in this work that he considered his experiment a failure, and that he merely published the map to prove that he had actually printed one in the manner described. Although the map is anything but neat in appearance, it is interesting as an illustration of a very ingenious experiment.

In the year 1793 he succeeded in printing Chinese characters with movable types, his experiments in this direction being greatly admired at that time. Besides the many activities described he founded a coloured paper factory and several branch bookselling businesses. He also found time to compile one or two bibliographical works. He died on the 29th January, 1794, after having secured himself a permanent place in the history of the art of printing. His friend Hausius published his biography later the same year. He had two sons, Bernhard Theodor, who established a printing office and bookselling business in St. Petersburg, and Christoph Gottlob, who remained in his father's business and who transferred the business about a year after his father's death to his friend Gottfried Christoph Härtel.

MR. JAST'S ADDRESS TO THE NORTHERN COUNTIES LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ON BRANCH WORK.¹

AS in the course of my remarks this afternoon I shall have certain things to say which may not be received by you with unalloyed enthusiasm, let me begin at least pleasantly by saying how much I appreciate the privilege of addressing for the first time a meeting of your Association. It is perhaps a rather unkind fate which introduces me to you in the character of a sort of Lord High Executioner. Fortunately, however, in speaking to a Northern audience the simpler and more direct you are, the less you try and wrap up what you have to say in smooth words, the better you are likely to succeed. And so I say with Mark Antony: "I only speak right on, a plain blunt man," who desires only the true welfare of the Library Association, and the progress of the library movement—as do we all, however much we may differ as to the means whereby that welfare and that progress may best be secured.

It is a serious matter, that which we are here to discuss, involving more than many of you perhaps understand, and what I want to try and do is to show you the whole question, the larger question, of which the matter of branch areas is only a part, as the Council see it, or perhaps I ought to say, to be quite frank with you, as I see it. And in order that you should so look at it, it is essential that you should forget for the time being your local partialities and interests. That I am aware is not an easy thing to ask of you, and it is made none the easier by the circular sent to your members by your Honorary Secretary, who no doubt sent me a copy which owing to the vagaries of the Post Office failed to reach my

¹ Delivered at the Harrogate Meeting, Wednesday, 29 November, 1911.

